

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
POSTAL REGULATORY COMMISSION
WASHINGTON, DC 20268-0001

Competitive Product Prices
Priority Mail
Priority Mail Contract 774

Docket No. MC2023-97

Competitive Product Prices
Priority Mail Contract 774 (MC2023-97)
Negotiated Service Agreement

Docket No. CP2023-98

PUBLIC REPRESENTATIVE COMMENTS ON
POSTAL SERVICE REQUEST TO ADD
PRIORITY MAIL CONTRACT 774
TO COMPETITIVE PRODUCT LIST

(January 5, 2023)

The Public Representative hereby provides comments pursuant to the Commission's notice in this docket.¹ In that notice, the Commission established the above referenced docket to receive comments from interested persons, including the undersigned Public Representative, on a Postal Service Request to add Priority Mail Contract 774 to the competitive product list.²

The Postal Service's request includes a Statement of Supporting Justification, a certification of compliance with 39 U.S.C. § 3633(a), and a copy of Governor's Decision No. 19-1. The Postal Service also filed (under seal) a contract related to the proposed new product and supporting financial data.

¹ Notice Initiating Docket(s) for Recent Postal Service Negotiated Service Agreement Filings, December 28, 2022 (Notice).

² USPS Request to Add Priority Mail Contract 774 to Competitive Product List and Notice of Filing Materials Under Seal, December 23, 2022 (Request).

According to the Postal Service, Priority Mail Contract 774 is a competitive product “not of general applicability” within the meaning of 39 U.S.C. § 3632(b)(3). Request at 1. The Postal Service also maintains that the prices and classification underlying the instant contract are supported by Governors’ Decision No. 19-1.³ The Postal Service further asserts that the Statement of Supporting Justification provides support for adding Contract 774 to the competitive product list and the compliance of the contract with 39 U.S.C. § 3633(a). Request, Attachment D at 1.

The effective date for Contract 774 is 2 business days following the day on which the Commission issues all necessary regulatory approval. Request, Attachment B at 7. The contract will expire 3 years from the effective date unless either party terminates the contract with 30 days’ written notice, or other specific events. *Id.*

COMMENTS

The Public Representative has reviewed the instant contract, the Statement of Supporting Justification, and the financial data and model filed under seal that accompanies the Postal Service’s request. Based upon that review, the Public Representative concludes that Priority Mail Contract 774 should be categorized as a competitive product and added to the competitive product list. Additionally, it appears that the instant contract will generate sufficient revenues to cover costs in the first year and thereby satisfy the requirements of 39 U.S.C. § 3633(a).

Product List Assignment. Pursuant to 39 U.S.C. § 3642, the Postal Service requests that Priority Mail Contract 774 be added to the competitive product list. 39 U.S.C. § 3642 requires the Commission to consider whether the Postal Service exercises sufficient market power that it can effectively set the price of such product substantially above costs, raise prices significantly, decrease quality, or decrease output, without risk of losing a significant level of business to other firms offering similar products. 39 U.S.C. § 3642(b)(1). Products over which the Postal Service exercises

³ Decision of the Governors of the United States Postal Service on the Establishment of Prices and Classifications for Domestic Competitive Agreements, Outbound International Competitive Agreements, Inbound International Competitive Agreements, and Other Non-Published Competitive Rates, February 7, 2019 (Governors’ Decision No. 19-1).

such power are categorized as market dominant while all others are categorized as competitive.

The Postal Service makes a number of assertions that address the considerations of section 3642(b)(1). Request, Attachment D. These assertions appear reasonable. Based upon these assertions, the Public Representative concludes that the Postal Service's Request to add Priority Mail Contract 774 to the competitive product list is appropriate.

Requirements of 39 U.S.C. § 3633. Pursuant to 39 U.S.C. § 3633(a), the Postal Service's competitive prices must not result in the subsidization of competitive products by market dominant products; ensure that each competitive product will cover its attributable costs; and ensure that all competitive products collectively contribute an appropriate share of the institutional costs of the Postal Service. Based upon a review of the financial data, the negotiated prices for Contract 774 should generate sufficient revenues to cover costs during the first year of the contract and therefore meet the requirements of 39 U.S.C. § 3633(a). In addition, during the 3 years Contract 774 is expected to remain in effect, the contract contains a mechanism for the annual adjustment of prices.

Finally, the Postal Service must file actual revenue and cost data for Contract 774 in future Annual Compliance Reports. These data will permit the Commission to review the financial results for Priority Mail Contract 774 for compliance with 39 U.S.C. § 3633(a).

The Public Representative respectfully submits the foregoing comments for the Commission's consideration.

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